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SENATE RESOLUTION 177
By Dixon

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize the Pastor and congregation of the Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church on the celebration of their one hundredth anniversary.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should recognize those esteemed religious institutions and their congregations who, through their unwavering commitment to service and faith in God, strive to enrich the lives of the people in their communities; and

WHEREAS, the good people of the Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church of Memphis are one such exemplary congregation who will be celebrating their one hundredth anniversary this year; and

WHEREAS, founded by Reverend C.H. Hayes, the Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church was organized in a small double tenant house on St. Paul Street in 1902; later, under Reverend Hayes's faithful guidance, the church began holding worship services in the Odd Fellows Hall of the Union and was designated as the Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church; and

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WHEREAS, subsequently, the Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church moved into a newly constructed frame building at 432 South Wellington, and then to 547 Mississippi Boulevard; and

WHEREAS, serving as the Pastor of the church for ten years, Reverend C.H. Hayes ably led the church through its earliest stages of development, laying the foundation for the now thriving Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, throughout its distinguished history, the Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church has been blessed by the leadership and direction of men of great wisdom and faith; the Pastors from 1902 to 1956 were: Dr. W.W. Whitten, Reverend A.M. Scott, Reverend G.W. Jackson, Reverend G.L. Green, Reverend H.W. Perry, Reverend M.C. Durham, Reverend G.F. Hammonds, Reverend W.C. Holmes, and Reverend Cleophus McKenzie, respectively; and

WHEREAS, in November of 1956, the current Pastor, Reverend James L. Netters, began his distinguished service with the Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, a man of great spiritual strength, he earned the affection and respect of his congregation with his first sermon, "Up Together, " which was based on Acts 3:1; since that time, it has been a journey "Up Together" for the members of the Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church and their beloved Pastor, Reverend Netters; and

WHEREAS, from 1972 to 1976, Reverend Chester Berryhill, Jr. conscientiously served as the Assistant Pastor of the Mount Vernon Missionary Baptist Church; in April of 1990, Reverend Roger R. Brown was installed as Assistant Pastor; and

WHEREAS, due to the continued growth of its congregation, the Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church, after sixteen years of holding services on Mississippi Boulevard, moved to the Westwood Community at 620 Parkrose; and

WHEREAS, in the next eighteen years, the Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church expanded from 300 members to over 4000; on November 13, 1983, the large and faithful

membership of the Church celebrated the retirement of their mortgage debt and began plans for a new sanctuary for God's people; and

WHEREAS, the Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church has significantly contributed to the social, cultural, and spiritual vitality of the greater Memphis community; the church's Outreach Ministries has established many activities and programs for their congregation and community, including The Revelations in 1973, Nursery in 1974, Daycare and Kindergarten in 1974, Media Ministry in 1974, Prayer Services in 1977, Baptist Training Institute in 1977, Junior Church in 1979, Security Services in 1979, Senior Citizens Fellowship in 1980, Nurses' Guild in 1980, Prayer Garden in 1981, Telephone Counselors in 1981, Singles' Ministry in 1990, Banner Ministry 1991, and the Pastor's Team in 1991; and

WHEREAS, the Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church's Revelations program was established through the vision of James Netters, Jr., the son of Pastor Netters; a vital part of the church's music department, The Revelations perform praise and thanksgiving in song each Sunday, serving as a rich and special blessing for the members of the church; and

WHEREAS, the Sunday School and Missionary Departments of the Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church also play a pivotal role in the spiritual growth and development of the church's members; and

WHEREAS, the Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church's Baptist Training Institute instructs its own members, as well as members of other churches, in Christian leadership and spiritual progression; and

WHEREAS, embracing the children and youth of its ministry, the Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church's Junior Church is an integral part of the worship structure; the Junior Church holds a full worship service, with adult coordination and supervision, for children ages 4 through 12 in the Fellowship Hall; and

WHEREAS, to help strength its youth socially, emotionally, physically, and spiritually, the Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church sponsors Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, athletics, drama, Red Circle, Royal Ambassadors, and many other beneficial programs; and

WHEREAS, in 1990, the Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church added an additional worship service in the early morning to both the Senior Church and the Junior Church worship schedules; and

WHEREAS, incorporated in May of 1991, the Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church held its official ground-breaking ceremony for their new edifice, which is dedicated to the glory of God, on December 29, 1991; the new sanctuary, octagonal in design, seats 3,000 people; and

WHEREAS, opening Sunday services with the words, "There's a sweet, sweet Spirit in this place, it must be the Spirit of the Lord, " Reverend Netters has prayerfully and graciously led the congregation of the Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church for forty-six years; and

WHEREAS, the Pastor, Reverend James L. Netters, Assistant Pastor, Reverend Roger R. Brown, and the faithful congregation of the Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church will continue their work of joyous and committed service to God and their community, building on the sterling record of the past one hundred years and looking to the future with hope and confidence, always growing in spirit, stewardship, and ministry; and

WHEREAS, it is the privilege of this General Assembly to acknowledge and applaud the Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church upon the occasion of its one hundredth anniversary for its dedication to the spiritual welfare of the citizenry of this great State; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, That we hereby honor the congregation and Pastor, Reverend James L. Netters, of the Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church for their many years of service to God, their community, and to this State, and extend to them our best wishes as they embark on their one hundred first year of humble Christian service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.